

ENTROPY

July 1989
Number Two

This is the beginning of *Entropy* #2, as of now a semi-regularly published. new addition to the postal diplomacy hobby. The publisher of this loosely organized mass of pages, by many called a 'zine, is Jason Bergmann (the guy doing the typing right now) who resides at 10740 Lathrop, Dallas, TX, 75229. MAJOR WARNING: the place of publication of *Entropy*, and the place where you mail stuff to me is changing. On July 22 I will vacation for two weeks. Then sometime in the week of August 7-11 I will load up the light blue, Texas plated, foreign made but domestically driven Toyota Corolla SR5 with most of my worldly belongings and I will make the trek down I-20 to Atlanta GA, my non-summer residence. What does that mean for you? Implication: Send all *Entropy* mail and all Jason Bergmann mail to PO BOX 23780, Atlanta GA, 30322 after August 1. Also, there may be up to a three week delay in responses to mail in that period of transition-----easy 'nuff???

For those interested, *Entropy* can be purchased at the cost of \$6.50 payable in cash or check (to me - I told you this thing was a scam). Free issues are awarded for standbys and *Entropy* points (described later this issue). Trades are cautiously considered; I'd like to start a few, but not too many.

Why are you receiving a copy of this rag? Well, you could be one of the fools who sent me money, or you could have promised money or shown interest without sending money, in which case this is free of charge. Or, I might be sending one just so that you will get the lovely change of address message which I have included above. Finally, you could be someone absolutely unconnected with the hobby, who the mailman delivered this to by mistake, and are wondering what in the world this is. If so, don't ask, and save this for winter-time to start fires with.

I was quite pleased with the response to last issue. I guess that the begging and pleading worked. Pete Gaughin warned me that "*Entropy* always increases in size"; I suspect that that is a good omen for the future of the 'zine. But as the issues get thicker, the costs of running it go up. I wonder if I can write it off as a business loss.....

Tom Nash in a press item in *BT.DT* included my name in a list of "Brat Pack" members. Now hold on now, let's not get too hasty here. I mean, including me in a list with the likes of Nash and Lilleleht ~~is an insult~~ isn't much of a compliment anyways.....besides everyone knows that whatever Brat Pack members do in Atlanta ALWAYS ends up on the wrong videotape. Thanks a lot for the thought, but the idea of the Fulton County Prosecutor looking into my affairs just because I'm on some silly list is not very appealing to me.

Inside this issue, you will find a couple of gamestart announcements, Postal Junta Houserules, letters, more science, and an introduction to the nifty new system of *Entropy* points. Enjoy!

Entropy points

How do zines rate their players? Many of them don't, feeling it unnecessary given the small number of games which are played. Some zines reward players successes with free issues, either in diplomacy or in trivia contests, etc. Why not go a few steps further?

In what I hope will turn out to be a brilliant step forward in 'zine marketing techniques, I am creating a system for determining the best overall *Entropy* player. The system is based upon the awarding of "Entropy points" for successes in everything offered in the zine. For every 20 Entropy points earned by a player, a free issue of the zine is awarded. A list of grand totals will be included in the zine on a semi-regular basis. Hopefully the competitive spirit will take over and you, the *Entropy* subscriber, will fall for this new twist to the money-scam I've set up.

I intend for both the long term games and the issue-by-issue contests to contribute to the point totals. Points will be awarded at game endings.

Diplomacy and Gunboat: 60 points per game will be awarded. A solo win nets the player all 60 points. All players sharing in a draw will split the 60 points equally (for example, a three-way would net all three players 20 points each).

Junta: For each dollar in a Swiss bank account at the end of the game, a player will receive one E.P. (entropy point). A bonus of twenty points for the winner of the game.

Cinema and TV Trivia: 10 points will be divided up among how ever many questions are included in the issue. Correct answers net E.P.'s.

I am thinking of running a game of Source of the Nile open to all subscribers on a play as you want basis. Each V.P. published will net the player one entropy point. Players will enter and leave the game whenever they please. I will consider leaving it open until the map mostly fills up, which should be quite a while. It would become another of the issue-by-issue events in which a subscriber could be involved with little effort (like Gunboat and Cinema Quiz).

Does anyone have suggestions about the above proposal?

Playlist: Still Anderson Bruford Wakeman and Howe. Unlucky for me, the summer tour puts them in Atlanta on July 30 and in Dallas on August 30. Isn't that a classic example of Mr. Murphy in action? Also Queen, Greatest Hits; Steve Winnwood, Arc of a Diver; Robin Hitchcock and the Egyptians, Globe of Frogs and The Cars, The Cars.

Reading list: Red Prophet, by Orson Scott Card, the second in a series that I'm sure will continue. Magician, Apprentice, Magician, Master, Silverthorn, and Darkness at Sethanon by Raymond Feist. That's one more series that I have finished. Finally, I've decided to read the Foundation series. I've gotten through the first one, and will probably begin others soon. All of the above were great.

Summer Movies

This summer, I've had little chance to see many of the movies in theatres, with a few exceptions. I have, however, made the most of the offerings on Cable and VCR. These have enabled me to gather quite a good assortment of trivia questions relating to 80's movies and trash TV.

Batman was one movie which I did get a chance to see this summer. It was definitely better than any in the Superman series, which wasn't a difficult task. I tend to agree with the critics that Jack Nicholson's Joker stole the show, but isn't that how it's supposed to be? Keyton was a suitable Dark Knight; I'd like to hear people stop bitching about how bad a casting choice it was and start telling me who would have been a better choice. I'd give it 8.5/10 for some great fights. Jack Nicholson, and the Batmobile (what a car!). One thing was disturbing: the bat-plane must be made of cardboard! There is NO WAY that after missing the Joker with machine guns and air-to-ground missiles that then the Joker could shoot down the plane with ONE shot from a glorified pistol. Quite a cheap way to set up the final fight scene; some writer got really lazy. The real question is "Would I see it again?". Yes, but not in the theatre. I'll rent the cassette.

I am already sick of the Batman paraphenalia. I see too many people wearing yellow and black bats on shirts and hats. I wouldn't be surprised if people started wearing bat-tatoos. "Holy batbooks" like the official Batman program, hardcover book of the movie, and the new comic book version of the movie are everywhere. Stop it! It's only a movie!

Cinema and TV trivia

Isn't it great to be the first? In this issue over 20 points worth of trivia are offered. Consider it another in a series of "Grand Opening" specials.

1) For one Entropy point each, name the sweatogs.

2) For three points each, name the movie from which each of these lines come:

A: "That conversation made a lot more sense the second time"

B: "No, mother, you just murdered me! Take that to your god damned therapist."

C: "I know. Yellow sneakers. Checkered shirt. Lets talk ice cream!"

D: "Life is like a snake, like a snake crawling out of its own dead skin."

E: "How old are you?"

"Let's put it this way, Jerry. I fought for the South.....We lost"

F: "Oh, Michael. I wish I could kiss you."

"I've been thinking about that too, so I bought you some wax lips"

Please include your answers on a separate sheet of paper if you want them to be considered. Mail them to PO Box 23780, Atlanta GA 30322 by August 25th.

Game Offerings

Operon: Regular Diplomacy. This is the first *Entropy* gamestart. The Boardman number has been applied for, and hopefully I'll have it by next issue.

The deadline for Spring 1901 moves (and press!) is August 25th. Six weeks should be enough for first season. Normally I'll give an issue off before Spring, but for this one I'll just delay the 'zine two weeks.

AUSTRIA: Eric Schlegel, 1284 Pearson Pl., Belcamp MD, 21017
ENGLAND: Michael A. Schnelker, 6611 Newburgh Place, Fort Wayne IN, 46835
FRANCE: Chris Hurley, 3508 Orbitan Road, Parkville MD, 21234
GERMANY: Jim Stark, 3900 Shandra Way, College Park GA, 30349
ITALY: Jim Diehl, 10530 West Riverview Dr., Eden Prairie MN, 55347
RUSSIA: Gene Gesner, 808 West Avalon St., Longview TX, 75603
TURKEY: Stuart Lange, 904 Fox Chase Lane, Riverdale GA, 30296

Phenylalanine: Our game of "Earplug" or no-press Gunboat has been filled! I can't do one of those nifty player lists, but just check the blanks below. If your name and a position appear, like it or not.....you're in this one to the end.

The Miller Number(s) of this pinnacle of excitement have/has been applied for. [The term "Miller number" is singular or plural depending upon how into this whole number war you really are. For some people there is only one "Miller number" and there is a "Sacks number"; I'm not really sure what the other camp calls the opposition's number system, but I bet there's a different name for it. As far as I care, a number is a number, and for the players' service I will include one of each. There have been real shooting wars fought over World Cup Football matches, so nothing is too silly for people to find an excuse to feud about. Now back to this regularly scheduled gamestart announcement.]

Your Name: _____ Your Position: _____

Actual game related correspondence (maybe):

Telomere: "Family" or unlimited-press Gunboat has three takers. Who are they? Well it wouldn't be Gunboat if I told you. Suffice it to say that they are lonely. And with no gamefee, it wouldn't put you out any to give it a try, would it?

Junta: Postal Junta houserules are on the next page. \$5.00 gamefee. No takers yet, but some interest has been shown. 4-7 needed

Cofactor: Our newest Diplomacy offering. Preference lists are accepted. 7 needed. \$5.00 gamefee.

Standby list: One free issue for joining this highly selective list of people. You could join Tom Nash, Vince Lutterbie, Tim Stark, and Chris Hurley.

Postal Junta Houserules

- I. Sequence of Play. In order to run this thing with as much speed as possible, it will be necessary to combine many of the game turns. This will result in the following sequence of play:
 - A. Gamestart. All players will be informed of their family names and the Contents of their hand. Orders will consist of presidential nominations and votes (see roll call rules below). Players will submit orders for both rounds of the vote. If a player does not wish to be president, then that player must submit a note to that effect this turn.
 - B. Turn 1. Players will be informed of all cards played in both rounds of the roll call vote, and the name of the new president. The new president will be informed of the amount of the first year's foreign aid money. All players draw two new cards and are informed of the contents of their hand. Orders will include required discards (if more than six cards in hand) of all players. The president will assign cabinet positions and draft a budget.
 - C. Turn 2. Required discards, the budget, and cabinet positions will be announced. Players must submit orders for the roll call vote on the budget (both rounds). The Minister of Internal Security submits a conditional order stating "If the budget does not pass, I will/will not seize the Chamber of Deputies". If no conditional is ordered, then the Minister will not seize it.
 - D. Turn 3. Players are informed of the results of the previous turn. Orders for Turn 4 will include the selection of locations (and possible declaration of exile). Players also order assassination attempts.
 - E. Turn 4. Assassination attempts are resolved. If the president was assassinated, then a separate turn is inserted to elect a new president. If not, then bank transactions are concluded (if the bank was open). Players order whether or not they will move in the rebel phase of a coup (see coup rules below) and play any coup excuse cards here.
 - F. Next year turn 1. If a coup occurred then coup turns are inserted here. If no coup took place, then bank closed transactions take place, players are informed of new cards, and the president is informed of the foreign aid money. The president may reassign cabinet positions and must submit a budget. All players submit required discards.
 - G. Goto C above
- II. Deadlines. I will try to run this at a faster rate than the 'zine. It is clear that some turns will require more negotiations than others. If I receive orders from all players prior to the deadline set, then I will adjudicate the game at that time.

III. Game ending. In order to add a little spice to the game I will insert a card in the last half of the foreign aid deck called "Congressional hearing - Generous superpower cuts off all foreign aid." The game will end when that card comes up. It should also help finish the game before the year 2000.

IV. Simultaneous play. All players actions occur simultaneously. This has implications on Rollcall voting, Assassination attempts, and coup movement.

V. Political cards. Play of cards must be submitted with orders. Card play may be conditional on anything, even other's moves in the same turn. If a card can be played at any time and the player does not specify when, it will occur at the beginning of the turn. If a player orders a card played which may not be played at that time, the card remains in the players hand and the player will receive a GM notice of the reason that the card may not have been played (in private). Discards should be ordered with moves; players may discard any card, including face up influence cards. Players may trade cards as well. Both players must indicate the conditions of the trade exactly in their orders. Players may trade money for cards as well, but it must be money in "hand" and the player must state in what form the transfer will occur (1s, 2s, or 3s). Other players will be informed of the number of cards and number of bills which change hands. A gift is just a trade without reciprocation; both players must agree to a gift. Trades occur before other adjudications of the same turn.

VI. Roll call votes. Both rounds of a roll call are adjudicated in the same turn, and all votes in a particular round are cast simultaneously. Second round votes may be (and should be) conditional on others first round votes or the "status" of the item being voted on. Remember that presidential nominations occur in the first round of a roll call.

VII. Assassinations. All attempts are revealed simultaneously. Players must indicate which card they are using (or the Minister's free assassin), the location of the attempt, and the player they are trying to "ice".

***If two players kill each other the money of both players is shuffled into the money pile.

***If two players both successfully assassinate a third, neither player gets the money and the money is shuffled into the money pile.

***If player one kills player two who killed player three, then player three's money is shuffled into the deck, and player one gains the money of player two.

VIII. Presidential resignation. A resignation may occur at any time. If ordered, it occurs at the end of the turn adjudicated. A special turn is added which consists of nominations and votes for the new president.

IX. Press. Press for this game of Junta will be Black of course. Rumors fly in Los Republica de los Banannas and their source is usually difficult to determine.

X. Coups.

A. Starting a coup. During the adjudication of Turn 4, players will be informed of any coup excuses which exist (Budget failed, successful assassination, Minister seized Chamber, or player chose Headquarters as a location). If one exists, players may choose to start a coup by ordering units to move, placing new units on the map, or bombarding the palace. Orders take place between turn four and next year turn one. All players doing one of the three above things are rebels. No loyalists may move in that phase. If more than one player moves in this phase, then the first rebel is

- a) a player who chose headquarters IF headquarters was the only coup excuse given.
- b) a player who placed new units on the map
- c) a player that played a coup excuse card IF that is the only coup excuse given
- d) the Minister, if the minister moved in the first rebel phase.
- e) Determined randomly in case of a tie in the above, or if none of the rebels meet any of the above conditions.

Players may make their orders conditional like "If another player moves units in this phase then I will". In that case that player forfeits the right to be First Rebel.

If headquarters is the only coup excuse and no other player plays a coup excuse, and the player(s) that chose headquarters did not move, then no coup occurs. Any units moved in that phase are not moved, and any orders to move are NOT PUBLISHED.

Players may always play coup excuse cards in the orders following turn four. All players should be aware of that and make conditionals accordingly.

B. Coup orders. Players should order movement for one stack, and firing options for all stacks. Firing may be conditional upon movement. Players should indicate if they will fire at any particular units [the default is that all units of opposing players will be fired at] and the order of priority of fire for those units [if unordered, an opposing unit is picked randomly]. For example, Player A leaves his 3 army units in the university. Player B has four palace guards in the palace and player C has 4 strikers in the market. Player A might order: "In phase one, fire at strikers, do not fire at palace guards. In phase two and three, fire at palace guards only if they fired at me in phase one, else fire at the strikers. If all strikers are dead, then do not fire at the palace guards." Conditions should be given for all three combat turns.

Players may order new units on the map in any turn an

C. First fire. Any unit which is moved forfeits the right to first fire. Only those players units which remain in place have first fire over units which move.

D. Retreats. Retreats are ordered in the phase after units are dislodged. It is assumed that a player does not disapprove of a player's retreat unless the disapproval is included in orders. The retreating player should list all available provinces in an order of priority. If all listed provinces are blocked by players unwilling to allow the retreat, then the dislodged units must disband

Here endeth the first edition of the Junta Houserules. Expect them to evolve as the game is played and experience grants the necessary wisdom.

Enthalpy

NEW DIPLOMACY PLAYERS:

[Following is a note that Tom Nash left on Compuserve concerning the birth of his newest child. I suspect that congratulations are in order, but more are due to his wife, who went through quite a lengthy labor. One note for Samuel Nash. If there is some uniformity in life, your mother will remember this day forever and remind you of it at the worst times, especially since she was in labor through the night. I still hear "I knew you'd turn out rotten ever since the trouble you caused me that morning in July.....".]

Sammy boy, or as he is officially named, Samuel Charles Nash, made his arrival at 4:20 AM this morning [July 10]. At 7 lbs. 3 ozs, he quickly recovered from an attempted stab by his own umbilical cord, which wrapped around his neck, and immediately conned the Obstetrician out of two home centers.

By 5:30 there were no more pacifiers in the nursery, as Sam had gotten all the other newborns to lend theirs to him, and had a collection of 17 in his crib. He insisted they were all "on loan" and were to be returned in the Fall (Honest!). He was heard to mutter something about "damn, I only needed one more." [They start their training early in the Nash family]

By 6:03 the formal challenge to Mickster jr to a game of "Intimate Dip" had been issued. Humanitarians everywhere have denounced this as needless slaughter of innocent Kentuckians. There has been enough slaughter of Prestons by Nashes to last three lifetimes.

Hell, the kid came so early (9 days early) we just **might** make it to DipCon yet! [Why not enter Samuel Charles in Dipcon as well. So long as you've already started imposing roles, why not go all the way?]

HOUSERULES:

[In addition to a wonderful critique by the new BNC, Don Williams, for which I offer my thanks, I received the following note from Mark Lew....]

"Hypothetical situation: Operon is humming along nicely. It's 1903 and France and Germany are getting ready to finish off England, but the alliance is showing signs of wear. Nervous, the two players order their units toward the border. By fall it's clear that there'll be a war. Germany has F Hol, A Ruh and A Mun; France has only A Bel and A Bur in the area, and his other units are far from home. If he can only hang onto Bel and keep Germany from moving into Bur, the French player figures, he'll be okay. But how to do it? It looks like a simple guessing game, but as a sophisticated tactician, he sees that he can use the "scissors" defense. Figuring that an attack on Bel is likely to come from the fleet and an attack on Bur is likely to come from Munich, the French player orders A Bel-Ruh, A Bur-Ruh. This leaves him vulnerable to a supported attack from Ruhr, but it stymies either F Hol-Bel, A Ruh S A Mun-Bur or A Mun-Bur, A Ruh S F Hol-Bel by cutting the support. Clever.

[More Mark Lew] "But the German player is cleverer still. He orders A Mun-Bur, F Ruhr S ITALIAN F Munich-Burgundy. The support should be cut and the move should fail, but Germany insists that it must succeed. There it is, he says, right in your houserules: 'An order of 'F Ruhr S ITALIAN F Munich-Burgundy' will succeed if the ordering player has an army in Ruhr and any player moves an army from Munich to Burgundy.' Now what do you do?"

[Well, uh, looks like I goofed. I have been revising the houserules in the last month and a change there will need to be another revision. The houserule should read "An order of F Ruhr S ITALIAN F Munich-Burgundy will not be disqualified if the ordering player has an army in Ruhr and any player moves an army from Munich-Burgundy. The order would fail, of course, if the support was cut." Better? Let me say that I both like and hate the way you think.]

SCIENCE:

[Well, here I am in the second issue and I didn't go out and find anything interesting to put in this part of the issue. I wanted to go read up on superconductivity, but never did, so Bednorz and Muller's 1986 Nobel prize will need to wait an issue or so. Please be satisfied with this issue's answers of the following questions.....Again from Mark Lew]

"What is Operon? I used to be a biochem buff, so I remember phenylalanine
H Once upon a time I knew all the amino acids. No more....
| Presumably a telomere is something that telomerizes. That just
COOH--CH2---Ph means that it adds onto the end of the chain, right? Or is
| there more than that?"
NH2

[An operon is a unit of transcription, containing (usually) promoter regions, enhancer regions, start codons, stop codons, etc. In prokaryotes they often code for more than one protein. Phenylalanine is correct. The next one I throw out will not have a benzene in it, maybe that should make the next one harder. The telomere is just the end of a chromosome, just as the centromere is where both chromatids are joined in the centre. It is just a name of a region, no more. The telomere and centromere are composed of heterochromatin, DNA that is hardly ever (or never) transcribed. It is thought to serve a structural purpose for the chromosome. The new diplomacy gamestart is named Cofactor. For those who care to know, a cofactor is a molecule whose presence is necessary for a protein to function. It can be an inorganic mineral like Ca++ or if organic, it is named a vitamin.]

SATANISM:

Last issue brought in a few reponses, like the following letter from Gene Gesner. He wrote: "I agree with your conclusion about symbols and enforcing religion, however I disagree with your statement that this is contrary to the founding father's values.

"I agree that the government should not promote or hinder a particular belief system. It is up to the proponents of each "religion" to gain their own place in society. Thus the now defunct Moral majority claimed its place for conservative Christian values, just as NOW claims its place for progressive feminist values.

"However, our founding fathers did legislate certain moral values. Just think, if they had been Satanists, human and animal sacrifices would be acceptable. Slavery, a moral issue, has been allowed and then made illegal. I believe that our founding fathers assumed a basic Christian morality, but not denominational.

"I believe most people today try to sweep this idea under the rug because of the interpretation of the first amendment. Remember that most of these founding fathers came from Christian groups seeking to worship in a different form than Anglicans and Catholics. There was to be no "State Religion" was the thought behind the First Amendment.

"As for today, we should treat people according to law and use the system to make changes by the methods our founding fathers set up."

[Somewhere I remember reading that George Washington wouldn't even set foot in a church; he viewed religion as a waste of time. Thomas Jefferson was a deist, believing in the non-intervention of God in the affairs of man. Yet, the Bill of Rights was written the way that it was. The First Amendment was written not to be a statement for religious freedom per se. The entire Bill of Rights is a statement that when in conflict, the rights of the individual should take precedence over the views of the collective. I agree that they probably wouldn't like it if people were sacrificing animals to dark gods; but this is all conjecture. Who knows what people 200 years ago would do today, anyway?]

Well, the Junta house rules ran a lot longer than I thought, so I'll need to cut it off here. Next issue will see all of the other letters on Satanism and the Educational system, plus reviews of Dalcon and Poolcon, Spring 1901 in the games plus whatever else shows up. Have a good August!

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